

## CLAIMS:

1. A switchable element comprising:  
a chamber (111), comprising a first body of fluid (101) and a second body of fluid (102), said first body of fluid being at least one of a polar liquid and a conducting liquid and said second body of fluid being a non-conducting liquid;  
5 a first electrode (103) and a second electrode (104), which are arranged to control spatial distribution of said first and second liquids; and  
wherein at least one of said first and second bodies of fluid comprises a surfactant (105).
2. A switchable element according to claim 1, wherein said surfactant (105)  
10 affects the interfacial tension (106) between said first and said second bodies of fluid (101, 102).
3. A switchable element according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein said surfactant (205) affects the interfacial tension (107) between said first body of fluid  
15 (106) and at least one wall (109) of said closed cell (111).
4. A switchable element according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein said surfactant (305) affects the surface tension (108) between said second body of fluid (102) and at least one of the walls (109) of said closed cell (111).  
20
5. A switchable element according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein said surfactant (105; 205; 305) is an alcohol.
6. A switchable element according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein  
25 said surfactant (105; 205; 305) is a molecule having a hydrocarbon or fluorocarbon part.
7. A switchable element according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein said surfactant (105) is at least one surfactant chosen from a group of surfactants comprising 2,2,3,4,4,4-hexafluoro-1-butanol and 2,2,3,3,4,4,4-heptafluoro-1-butanol.

8. A switchable element according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein said surfactant (105) is at least one surfactant chosen from a group of surfactants comprising pentafluorophenyltrimethylsilane, trifluoromethyltrimethylsilane and
- 5 trifluoromethyltriethylsilane.
9. A switchable element according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein said element is a switchable optical element.
- 10 10. A switchable element according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein said element is a motor.
11. A device comprising a switchable element (100) according to any one of the preceding claims.